



# WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. OF L., BY RESOLUTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

No. 11.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

HEADQUARTERS

801-809 B ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY

SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

## WORKMEN'S COMPENSATION

Congressional Commission Reopen Hearings in Its Investigation of This Important Subject.

## GENERAL INTEREST TAKEN

Constitutionality of Proposed Enactment Consumes Greater Part of Opening Session.

Washington, June 17.--The congressional commission appointed to investigate the subject of workmen's compensation has reopened its hearings. At the last session previous to the one mentioned adjournment was taken upon the suggestion of the commission to await the decision of the United States Supreme Court in the Standard Oil, Tobacco Trust and other cases, for the reason that in these cases there were points involved which, when decisions were handed down, might shed light upon the enactment of the measure under consideration. The first session of the reopened hearings was devoted to a discussion of the constitutional phases in the enactment of a compensation law. There were present representatives of the American Federation of Labor, together with representatives of the railway brotherhoods and attorneys for numerous railroads. Attorney Miles M. Dawson, an expert actuary, also appeared in advocacy of such a law. There is apparently a unanimity of opinion among all those appearing before the commission, relative to the needs of such a law. There is a difference, however, as to the manner in which it shall be applied. The discussion on the constitutional phase of the question which attracted the most attention, was that by Miles M. Dawson, of New York. Mr. Dawson has made a special study of this particular feature, having visited various countries where workmen's compensation laws are in actual operation. His contention was, that the constitution gave the right of the federal government to enact a law covering this feature and putting it into actual operation by an excise tax, and he based his contention on the opening section of the constitution of the United States, which says: "We, the people of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defense, promote the general welfare", etc. He laid stress upon the fact that the words "promote the general welfare" gave the law making power of the federal government ample authority to establish a system of workmen's compensation. It was also stated that the collection of this excise tax would be direct from the employer, and he, in turn, adding it to the cost of production, would be distributed and eventually paid by the consuming public. This feature apparently met

the views of those who were present and actively interested. Mr. Dawson's narrative of the operation of this law in Germany, which he stated in his opinion and that of those who have made a thorough investigation, was the very best plan extant, was exceedingly interesting. Under the operation of the laws in Germany, poverty has been almost wiped out of existence and employers and employees are in accord with the general plan in force. True, some minor details need alteration, but as a general proposition it has worked very successfully. In an interview with Mr. Dawson after the hearing closed, he stated that the compensation law of Germany had not had the effect of retarding the growth and efficiency of the labor organizations of that country; on the other hand, the organizations of labor had made their most prodigious growth since the law had been put in general operation.

Mr. Dawson later appeared before the Executive Council of the American Federation of Labor and delivered a masterful exposition of a workmen's compensation law. The Council was very much impressed with his intimate knowledge and deeply interested in the facts which he had gathered from all sections of the world. As a result of Mr. Dawson's appearance before the Council, a committee was selected from members of the Executive Council to make a thorough investigation of the scheme outlined by Mr. Dawson.

#### ----- CENTRAL LABOR UNION'S BANQUET -----

Members of Congress Holding Union Cards Honored by District of Columbia's Men of Labor.

Washington, June 17.--The Central Labor Union of Washington tendered a banquet to the union card members of Congress and the Executive Council, on June 14, at the New Ebbitt House. Over 200 guests were present. President James O'Connell, of the Machinists, acted as toastmaster. Speaker Champ Clark of the House of Representatives was an honored guest and made a characteristic address, featuring the right of government employees to petition Congress for a redress of grievances, which has been denied them by Executive Orders. His expressions were met with audible signs of approval. Congressman Wilson also made an address, confining his remarks to the insidious encroachments of the new-styled theories on "efficiency of labor" typified by the Taylor or Emerson Systems.

President Gompers delivered the address of the evening and characterized the remarks made by Speaker Clark as being characteristic and in harmony with former expressions and acts. He related numerous instances of a kindly spirit and feeling which Speaker Clark had always expressed toward the men of labor. President Gompers also made significant reference to the recent decision of the Supreme Court, contending that the important points had been decided against the men of labor, while relieving the individuals under sentence for contempt from paying the penalty assessed. "In the light of recent events", he said, "the congratulations which have poured in upon us as a result of the decision may have been premature". He then traced the activities of labor on the economic and political field, referring to the retirement of Congressman Littlefield of Maine, and the election of fifteen union men as members of the House of Representatives, as the result of the struggle and the activity of the men of labor. The Central Labor Union of Washington is to be congratulated on the splendid success which attended its efforts.

### "THE LADY DOETH PROTEST TOO MUCH"

#### American Paper and Pulp Association Circularizing Labor Papers— Charges Unwarranted Attack.

Washington, June 17.—The American Paper and Pulp Association is energetically flooding the labor papers and all labor organizations whose addresses are obtainable with a circular refuting (?) "the unwarranted attack made upon the American Writing Paper Company", regarding long hours and arduous conditions prevailing in the Holyoke mills. A long contest has been waged in Holyoke to better the condition of the men employed in the paper mills and to obtain the eight-hour day. Up to this time it has not been successful. There are mills, however, that are organized and paying living wages and are in agreement with organized labor. These latter mills are manufacturing paper bearing the water mark (union label) of the Paper Makers' Union, and many of the large international unions, as well as the American Federation of Labor, are using exclusively union water-marked paper. This fact is worrying the American Paper and Pulp Association, hence the circular mentioned. Union water-marked paper is rapidly increasing in demand.

#### TO ABOLISH FINES

Washington, June 17.—A bill has been introduced in the British House of Commons making it illegal to assess fines against workmen in cotton factories. The reasons advanced in favor of the measure is that while many factory managements have systems of fining employes for a multiplicity of things, other managements do not. It is claimed that this state of affairs results in unjust competition and has a depressing effect on wages, together with the constant accumulation of abuses.

#### APRIL IMMIGRATION

Washington, June 17.—The Department of Commerce and Labor issue a monthly bulletin detailing the number of aliens landing at the various ports, together with sex and nationality. The reports require a month in compilation, the April report having just been received. It gives the number of male immigrants for that month as 95,722, female 40,275, with a grand total for the month of 135,997. There were debarred 1,951 males and 348 females.

#### "SKULL AND CROSS BONES"

Washington, June 17.—The postoffice department still continues its discriminative and autocratic program. A campaign of intimidation has been inaugurated at Des Moines, Ia. Newspaper clippings referring to the postoffice department's hostile attitude to the American Federation of Labor, decorated with "skull and crossbones", have been secretly posted on the bulletin board. The local clerks in the postoffice are, in great part, members of the National Federation of Postoffice Clerks, in affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. It is reported that Congressman Prouty, who comes from the Des Moines district, and Senator Cummins will be appealed to in an effort to have the intimidation cease.

## PRINTERS' PROGRESS

Increases in Wage Scales, Distributed Over a Wide Scope of Country, the Order of the Day.

Washington, June 17.—The scale of the German Typographia of Evansville, Ind., has been increased from \$18.60 to \$19.20 for the year 1911, with a further increase to \$19.50 for the year 1912.

The newspaper scale at Muncie, Ind., has been increased \$1.00 per week for one year. The following year an added increase of 50 cents, to continue for two years, and the third year, a total increase of the present scale of \$2.00 per week to be in force the following three years.

At Eugene, Ore., after a strike lasting for two years with the Yaran Printing Company, a settlement has been reached and it will hereafter be a union office throughout.

Agreements have been entered into with three concerns in Fond du Lac, Wis., whereby the job men receive a \$2.00 per week increase and the machine operators \$1.00 per week increase.

Chicago Swedish Union has secured an increase of \$1.50 per week for all hand work employes, with a total increase (over the present scale) beginning July 1, 1913, of \$2.40.

The first agreements ever entered into between the Typographical Union and the publishers of Port Arthur and Fort William, Ont., have been concluded. An increase of \$2.00 per week has been secured.

The German Typographia of Winnipeg, Man., has secured an increase of \$2.00 per week, while the men on machines have secured one-half hour reduction in working time.

At Centralia, Ill., agreements have just been entered into securing to the employes advances of \$1.50 to \$2.00 per week for all members.

## BARBER SHOPS IN SPAIN

Tonsorial Parlors Compare Unfavorably With American Shops in Appointments and Prices Charged.

Washington, June 17.—According to government reports the barber shops in Malaga, Granada and Almeria, Spain, do not compare favorably with the tonsorial parlors of this country. The furnishings are of the meagerest sort usually, and are almost wholly devoid of those things considered essential for the comfort of patrons. The furniture is of the crudest sort, and there is little regard for cleanliness. Only one shop in the three cities mentioned is furnished with reclining and revolving barber chairs, and the shop prospers mainly because of possessing what is termed a "novelty" in that country. The price of a shave is 30 centimos (about 6 cents), and hair cutting 50 centimos (9.6 cents). Regular customers of better class shops pay 85 cents for a monthly service, which includes a daily shave and hair trimming as often as required.

## "SWEATING" IN BELFAST

Washington, June 17.—Great Britain's home office is to hold an inquiry into the serious allegations regarding "sweating" in certain branches of the linen and cognate trades in Belfast. Sir Ernest Hatch is to be appointed chairman, with W. S. Cohen representing the board of trade, and Mrs. Streetfield representing the Home Office.

## VANCOUVER STRIKE

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Washington, June 17.--Through an attempt on the part of the Master Builders' Association of Vancouver, B. C. to institute the "open shop", a general strike has taken place. Vancouver has for quite a number of years past been the dumping ground for a large number of immigrants from all the countries in the Far East, and conditions of labor have consequently been continually growing worse. This last attempt to destroy the organization of labor has been met by a firm resolve on the part of the members of labor organizations to try conclusions with the Master Builders. One unique feature in the Vancouver contest is the fact that the Chinese carpenters have made common cause with the organizations of labor. The Chinese are not organized into labor unions as we understand them, but are, however, members of what are termed "trade guilds", and one chinaman, in answer to a question as to why his fellow countrymen also ceased work, replied: "White man quit; all samee no like see Chinaman work; save trouble."

## PATTERN COMPANY FAIR

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Washington, June 17.--The May Manton Pattern Company has reached an agreement with the Typographical Union, Pressmen, Bookbinders and Stereotypers, and hereafter its entire printing department will employ only members of the various unions. This result has been brought about primarily by label agitation carried on by the International Typographical Union.

## ANOTHER JOURNAL UNIONIZED

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Washington, June 17.--The Western Tobacco Journal, doing business at Cincinnati, Ohio, has entered into an agreement with the Cincinnati Typographical Union, which provides that all the mechanical departments are hereafter to be conducted under union conditions.

## BRICKMAKERS' SETTLEMENT

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Washington, June 17.--The strike of the Chicago brick makers, involving 2,500 men, has been settled. The cause of the conflict was an attempt on the part of the employers to reduce the wages to the 1907 scale. This was resisted by the organization and after a 6-weeks' strike an agreement has been entered into whereby the present scale and working conditions are to be maintained. Approximately 20,000 laborers and mechanics were thrown out of employment on account of this strike, who will now be returned to work.

## RAILROAD INCREASES WAGES

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Washington, June 17.--An agreement between the Brotherhood of Railway Trainmen and the Order of Railway Conductors, with the Norfolk & Western Railway has been reached after conferences extending over quite a period. The agreement provides for a substantial increase in the wage rate and the adoption of a code of rules which will materially improve working conditions.

## CHILD EDUCATION NEGLECTED

Washington, June 17.—At the convention of the State Federation of Labor at Richmond, Virginia, a statement was made by John B. Olindest, a deputy in the office of the State Labor Commissioner, that in the course of his travels he had discovered more white boys who were unable either to read or write, than he had found among the colored population. The white population pay 90% of the total amount of money expended on the education of children in the state, and it is a strange anomaly, if the statement be true, that a greater percentage of white children than of the colored do not take advantage of the opportunities afforded. Accordingly, resolutions were adopted recommending compulsory education, and free books to the pupils in the public schools.

## SYRACUSE METAL WORKERS

Washington, June 17.—The men employed in the metal trades in Syracuse, approximating 3,000 in number, are in negotiation with their employers looking toward the adoption of a new scale of prices. It is thought at this time that an amicable adjustment will be reached. The metal trades desire a raise of 10%, 9 hours a day and Saturday half holiday.

## SALESMEN TO ORGANIZE

Washington, June 17.—The traveling salesmen, insurance agents and collectors, of Toledo, Ohio, recently held a meeting with the object in view of forming a union. Definite action has not as yet been reported, but it is understood that those in attendance pledged themselves as favorable to such an organization.

## CUT MADE IN TEXT BOOKS

Washington, June 17.—During the last session of the Ohio State Legislature, a bill designated as "Uniform Text Book Bill" failed of passage, but it is understood that the people of the State of Ohio, through the State School Book Commission, will be enabled to reduce the present price 16%. It has been shown that book companies were selling books made in Ohio at a lower price in other states than they were at home. According to the law now upon the statute books, the School Book Commission has a right to demand a certain stipulated price for books used in Ohio, based upon the selling price in other states by Ohio concerns. Should these book concerns in Ohio refuse to accept the Commission's award, it is rumored that the State may go into the publication of books on its own account.

## GARMENT WORKERS' STRIKE IN CLEVELAND

Washington, June 17.—The Ladies' Garment Workers' strike in Cleveland, Ohio, has assumed large proportions. From information just received, practically all of the people employed in this class of work are on strike and are confident and hopeful of an early, favorable conclusion of the contest.



## BOOT AND SHOE WORKERS

Continued Advance in Wages Being Secured, Together with Increasing Membership and Effectiveness.

Washington, June 17.—An amicable adjustment of wages in the last- ing departments throughout southeastern Massachusetts by the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, involving 2,600 employees, aggregated an increase in wages approximating \$300,000 a year.

The Industrial Workers of the World, following their usual methods, were successful in deluding a sufficient number of the Brooklyn union of Boot and Shoe Workers to strike in violation of its agreement, with the usual result that the Industrial Workers failed to make good their lurid promises, and the men have returned to work, and reinstated themselves in the recognized organization, while the I. W. W.'s have migrated to other fields to continue their nefarious practices.

In Montreal, Canada, two large shoe manufacturing concerns have merged, one of the firms in the consolidation having been in agree- ment with the Boot and Shoe Workers for many years, while the other has previously conducted its factory on the "open shop" plan. The merging of the two concerns has worked to the interest of the Boot and Shoe Workers' Union, however, for a new agreement has been entered into whereby union Boot and Shoe Workers will be employed exclusively thus giving the organization practically a maximum strength in that city.

An agreement has also been reached with Huckins & Temple of Mil- ford, Mass., and the Hartt Boot & Shoe Company of Fredericton, New Brunswick.

## REYNOLDS' OPINION

Washington, June 17.—Prevailing sentiment in America relative to judicial interpretation of laws is reflected in England. One of the greatest newspapers of Great Britain, Reynolds' Newspaper, editorially contributes the following anent Winston Churchills' recent speech in Parliament: "Mr. Churchill has made himself the spokesman of an enormous body of public opinion by his comments upon the manner in which the law courts have lost the confidence of the people in matters where class and party interests are involved. He was care- ful not to attack any individual judge, nor did he impugn the good faith and honor of the bench. He clearly stated that the bias was unconscious. He has nevertheless been subjected in the house to disgraceful attacks based upon 'monstrous misrepresentations' of what he actually did say. He was precluded by the deputy speaker's read- ing of the rules of order from making any reply or explanation. The country, however, needs none. It is with him."

## TRADE UNIONS RECOGNIZED

Washington, June 17.—The trade unions of England are to be officially recognized at the ceremonies of the coming coronation. W. J. Davis of Birmingham, Secretary of the National Society of Amalgamated Brass Workers, and W. Millen, Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee of the Congress, have been extended an invitation to attend by the earl marshal. Mr. Davis is one of the oldest trade union leaders in in the country. He entered the brass trade in 1861 and at the forma- tion of the Brass Workers' Society in 1872 became its general secre- tary, a position which he has held ever since.

## COGENT REASONS

A Master Printer Answers a German Suffragette in a Manner That Is Entirely Convincing.

Washington, June 17.—Recently in England Frau Maria Sischnewsky, a suffragette, advocated the teaching of the trade of a compositor to women. A master printer replied as follows:

"It is not only sex egotism, but a law of nature, which has brought about the present conditions. Primarily, the man must have work and earnings because he has other (and higher) duties than the woman. Many a master who views female compositors as but a cheaper class of labor overlooks the fact that this cheap labor can evolve into cheap competition. And that especially when a printer marries a female compositor, who may all the more readily determine to start a business of their own than can a single workman. In short, we have no ambition to reorganize our trade to meet Frau Sischnewsky's ideas, and in this respect we have the same interests at heart as have our employees."

## FIREMEN GET INCREASE

Brotherhood Committeemen, After Series of Conferences, Reach Satisfactory Agreement.

Washington, June 17.—The Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen and Enginemen have had a committee in this city for a number of days negotiating with the management of the Southern Railway Company for an increase of 20 per cent in the wages of the firemen employed on the system. For several days a cessation of work seemed imminent, then the matter was referred, under the Erdman act, to Commissioner of Labor Charles P. Neill and Commissioner Knapp of the Interstate Commerce Commission. Then began another series of conferences, but these have been fruitful of bringing the firemen and the railway management to an understanding and agreement. The firemen are to receive a 15 per cent advance, with better working conditions. This increase gives the firemen the second highest scale in the eastern district.

## LEVEN SHIPYARD STRIKE

Washington, June 17.—When the managers of the Leven Shipyards at Dumbarton, Great Britain, insisted upon the employment of non-unionists the members of the trade unions employed at the works quit, causing a closing down. The "open shop" policy has also caused another dock yard to practically suspend operations.

## CONFERENCE ON INSURANCE BILL

Washington, June 17.—The joint board representing the English parliamentary committee of the Trade Union Congress, the General Federation of Trade Unions and the Labor party will hold a special conference to discuss national insurance and the Osborne judgment on June 20-21. The joint board has issued a report on the subject of state insurance, which will form the basis of discussion at the conference.



## DANISH SEAMEN'S AGREEMENT

Uniform Work Day Established, Increased Wages Secured, With Overtime-Pay Provision.

Washington, June 17.--Negotiations between representatives of the Danish Sailors and Firemen's Union and the ship owners have resulted in an agreement. Formerly the working time has varied from nine to seventeen hours, but the new agreement stipulates a ten-hour day with pay for all time worked in excess thereof. Land and dock work, which formerly was from 6 a. m. to 6 p. m. has been reduced two hours. The agreement stipulates that the firemen are not to do the work of loaders at any point where a strike is on. The wage has been increased from 60 crowns (\$16.08) per month to 62½ crowns (\$16.75) per month. After three years the wage will again be increased to 65 crowns (\$17.42). The agreement is a complete recognition of the trade organization.

## DOCKERS OF MANNHEIM WIN

Washington, June 17.--After a week's negotiations before the Conciliation Board of Mannheim, Germany, an agreement has been reached which concedes a reduction in the working time of one-half hour a day, to go into effect in 1912, with a minimum wage of 22½ an hour. The professional strike breakers who took the places of the men during the contest, have all been discharged.

## NEW YORK STRIKE WON

Washington, June 17.--The Fancy Leather Goods Workers' Union has just won a victory in securing an agreement with one of the large manufacturing firms in New York. This firm had prepared for a long fight and had installed cots in the shop, where they had intended to house the strike breakers. As a result of the agreement, the strikers have all been reinstated and granted a 52-hour week.

## HOLYOKE STRIKE SETTLED

Washington, June 17.--The strike of the Holyoke, Mass. shop carpenters has been settled and under the agreement reached, the employees are to have 19 Saturday half-holidays during the coming year. This settlement came in the form of a compromise, but both parties to the agreement are well satisfied as to the outcome.

## TO FIGHT THE LAW

Nebraska's Law Forbidding Employment of Women at Night to Be Tested in the Courts.

Washington, June 17.--The legislature of the state of Nebraska passed a law forbidding the employment of women between the hours of 10 p. m. and 6 a. m. This law affects chiefly girls between the ages of 16 and 25, as women at these ages constitute the great majority of female employees. The employers are now pursuing the usual tactics, allowing themselves to be fined and then appealing the case to a higher court. It is hoped that the law will stand the test. Massachusetts and Indiana have a similar law.

## FOR GOVERNMENT CONTROL

Bill Introduced in United States Senate for Absolute Control of Public Utilities in District.

Washington, June 17.—The march toward the control of all public utilities and corporate combinations is moving forward with precision. Here and there a halt is noticed, obstructed by those who are frantically clinging to the hope the day of plundering may be yet prolonged. But strong public sentiment is sweeping on notwithstanding. A bill has been introduced in the senate by Senator Gallinger, the "standpatter," clothing the government with extraordinary powers regarding public utilities in the District of Columbia.

The physical valuation of the property of all public utilities corporations is directed to be taken. No books or records are to be kept by such corporations, other than those prescribed by the commission (district commissioners), and it is forbidden to remove such records from the district without the consent of the commission. Provision is also made for the examination and auditing of the accounts of utilities doing business within the district, and it is also provided that a general and comprehensive supervision shall be had over all the affairs of public utilities corporations in the district by a district commission, which latter is provided for in the bill.

## KING RAISES WAGES

Washington, June 17.—King George of England was recently petitioned by the unskilled laborers on his estates at Balmoral, Aberfeldie and Birkhall for an advance of 2 shillings a week in their wages. The employes, numbering seventy, consisting of roadmen, gardeners and foresters, as a result of their petition have been advanced 1 shilling per week.

## TO PREVENT DERAILMENT

Washington, June 17.—A joint resolution has been introduced in the House of Representatives by Congressman Dent of Alabama authorizing the Interstate Commerce Commission to investigate and report upon the availability of the Andrew safety appliance, designed to prevent derailments on railroads. The resolution has been referred to the committee on interstate and foreign commerce, the members of which recently witnessed a demonstration of the device on the Chesapeake Beach railroad.

## JUDAS TO BE REWARDED

Washington, June 17.—In recognition of the efforts of W. V. Osborne, the man who instituted the proceedings against the trade unions of England, and who secured a judgment forbidding the use of their funds to support parliamentary action, is to be presented with the customary and immemorial "twelve pieces of silver" allotted to Iscariots. A fund is being raised with which to present him a house.

Hudson (N. Y.) brewery workers secured eight hours for six months in the year and nine hours for other six months. Engineers also get increase.